

Bereskin & Parr

United States of America

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Patent Application

Title: Tossing Game

Inventor(s): John MacEachern

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Field of the Invention

[0001] This invention relates to a game. More particularly, the invention relates a game having a game board onto which additional playing pieces may be tossed.

5 Background of the Invention

[0002] Various games based on tossing pieces onto a game board are known. For example, United States Patent 4,305,587 discloses a magnet based target game in which flat magnetic game pieces are thrown onto a target board. The target board has a fixed configuration with several scoring areas. If a game piece is thrown into a scoring area, the player scores a point. United States Patent 6,131,905 discloses a game in which players compete the slider toss the marker as close as possible to a center piece without contacting the center piece. The center piece is a hollow container containing a magnet which may move during the game. Players score by landing a playing piece as close as possible to the center piece.

[0003] None of the prior art discloses a game in which the shape of a scoring area is modified by the position of a blocking piece and wherein players then attempt to score points by throwing additional playing pieces onto the modified scoring area.

Summary of the Invention

[0004] The present invention provides a game having a game board, one or more blocking pieces and one or more scoring pieces. In one embodiment, the game board has a general scoring area defined on it. A first player positions the blocking pieces and in doing so, attempts to cover as much as possible of the general scoring area. The uncovered portions of the general scoring area are defined as a specific scoring area. A second player then attempts to position the scoring pieces in the specific scoring area. The second player is awarded points for each scoring piece that is successfully positioned in this way. The blocking piece may optionally be positioned by tossing it onto the game board. Typically, the scoring pieces will be positioned by tossing them onto the game board.

[0005] In one embodiment, the game board, blocking pieces include indicia related to hockey. Other embodiments include indicia associated with soccer, football, basketball. The present invention is equally useful when provided with other indicia, including indicia which are not associated with any sport.

5 [0006] The shape of the blocking pieces provided with a particular embodiment of the invention may be identical, or differently shaped blocking pieces may be provided. Similarly, identically or differently shaped scoring pieces may be provided.

10 [0007] In another embodiment, the game board may include two or more general scoring areas, one of which is used as a "defensive" scoring area by each player. Each player positions a blocking piece on his or her own defensive scoring area to define a specific scoring area. The other player or players than attempt to position their scoring pieces into the first player's specific scoring area.

15 [0008] In other embodiments, more than one general scoring area may be provided and may be associated with different numbers of points or different rules for successfully positioning a scoring piece. For example, in a game based on football, an end zone scoring area may used for touchdowns and a field goal standard scoring areas may be used to field goals.

20 [0009] The game board, blocking pieces and scoring pieces may include magnetic layers that allow them to be attached to one another. In such an embodiment, the pieces become magnetically attached as they are positioned, allowing the game to be used more conveniently, and allowing it to be used with the game board in a non-horizontal position. Such an embodiment may also be used in a portable configuration in which the players pass the game board back and forth during a game.

25 [0010] In another embodiment, only the blocking pieces and scoring pieces may be provided with a magnetic layer. The game board may be formed of a magnetically transparent material and may be attached to a metal support using external magnets, tape, glue, clips or other fastening devices. Preferably, the metal surface is capable of being attached to a magnet, such as a typical refrigerator door.

30 The blocking and scoring pieces may then be positioned on the game board, where

they will become attached to underlying support and will thus remain on top of the game board.

[0011] In another embodiment, the present invention provides a game comprising: a game board having a general scoring area; one or more blocking pieces configured to be affixed to said game board; and one or more scoring pieces configured to be affixed to said game board.

[0012] In another embodiment, the invention provides a game comprising: a game board; one or more receiving pieces configured to be affixed to said game board for defining one or more general scoring areas; one or more blocking pieces configured to be affixed to said game board for defining one or more specific scoring areas; and one or more scoring pieces configured to be affixed to said game board.

[0013] In another embodiment, the present invention provides a game comprising: a game board; one or more receiving pieces for positioning on said game board to define one or more general scoring areas; one or more blocking pieces for positioning on said game board to define one or more specific scoring areas; and one or more scoring pieces for positioning on said game board.

[0014] Other features and variations of the present invention are described below.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0015] A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described in detail with reference to the drawings, in which:

Figures 1a, 1b and 1c are top views of various pieces comprising a game according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

Figures 2a, 2b and 2c are cross sectional views of Figures 1a, 1b and 1c respectively;

Figures 3a and 3b are a cross-sectionals views of alternative structures for game boards according to the present invention;

Figure 4 is a top view of the embodiment of the game of Figures 1 and 2 in use;

Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a top view of a game according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 7 is a top view of a game according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

5 Figure 8 is a top view of a game according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 9 is a top view of a game according to a fifth embodiment of the present invention.

Detailed Description of Exemplary Embodiments

10 [0016] Reference is first made to Figures 1a, 1b and 1c which illustrate components of a game 20 according to a first embodiment of the present invention. Game 20 comprises a game board 22, a blocking piece 24 and a plurality of scoring pieces 26, one of which is illustrated in Figure 1c.

15 [0017] Game board 22 depicts a hockey net 28 which defines a general scoring area 30. Net 28 has a pair of goal posts 32 and 34, a cross bar 36 and a goal line 38. General scoring area 30 is delimited by goal post 32, 34, cross bar 36 and goal line 38, which are not part of the general scoring area. In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the goal posts 32, 34, cross bar 36 and goal line 38 may be included within the general scoring area.

20 [0018] Blocking piece 24 depicts a goaltender 40. Scoring piece 26 depicts a hockey player 42.

25 [0019] Reference is next made to Figures 2a, 2b and 2c, which illustrate, respectively, game board 22, blocking piece 24 and scoring piece 26 in cross section. Game board 22 comprises a top layer 44 and a base layer 46. Net 28 is printed or otherwise formed on a top surface 45 of top layer 44. Typically, top layer 44 may be a sheet of paper, plastic or other material suitable for printing on. Base layer 46 is a flat magnet which may be used to affix game board 22 to a metal support. Base layer 46 may be rigid or flexible. It may be desired to make base layer 46 flexible or to divide it into sections to allow game board 22 to be rolled or folded. If base layer 46 is divided 30 into sections, each section may itself be rigid or flexible. Alternatively, base layer 46

may be made rigid throughout its dimensions, to allow game 20 to be moved while in use. The use of game 20 is described below.

[0020] In alternative embodiments of the present invention, base layer 46 may not be magnetic but may simply be the supporting surface for top layer 44. Again in 5 this case, base layer 46 may be rigid or flexible and may be divided into sections. In another alternative embodiment, game board 22 may comprise a single layer onto which net 28 is printed or formed directly. For example, game board 22 may comprise a sheet of paper, cardboard, wood, metal, plastic or another suitable material onto which net 28 has been printed. If game board 22 does not incorporate a magnetic 10 layer, it may be attached to a metal support or to another support by the other attachment means such as magnets, tape, clips, glue or a fastening device such as screws or staples. Alternatively, game 20 may be used without attaching game board 22 to any support.

[0021] Figure 3a is a cross-sectional view of another alternative embodiment of 15 a game board 22' according to the present invention. Game board 22' incorporates three layers including a top layer 44' onto which an image such as net 28 may be printed. An intermediate magnetic layer 46' allows game board 22' to be attached to a metal support and a rigid backing layer 48' provides rigidity to game board 22'. Alternatively, game board 22' may be assembled with backing layer 48' sandwiched 20 between top layer 44' and base layer 46'.

[0022] Figure 3b is a cross-sectional view of another alternative embodiment of 25 a game board 22" according to the present invention. Game board 22" has a top layer 44" on which an image such as net 28 may be printed or formed. Game board 22" does not have a magnetic layer. Game board 22" may comprise a sheet of paper, cardboard, wood, metal, plastic or another suitable material onto which net 28 may be printed or formed. Game board 22" may be attached to a support by the other attachment means such as magnets, tape, clips, glue or a fastening device such as screws or staples. Game board 22" may be attached to a magnetic support using one or more external magnets. The magnetic support need not itself 30 magnetized, but need only be capable of magnetic attachment with the external

magnets. Alternatively, game board 22" may be used by positioning it on a support, without attaching game board 22" to the support.

[0023] Referring to Figure 2b, blocking piece 24 is comprised of a top layer 50 and a base layer 52. Top layer 50 has goaltender 40 imprinted on its top surface 51 and base layer 52 is comprised of a magnetic material which is suitable for attaching blocking piece 24 to the top layer of game board 22.

[0024] Referring to Figure 2c, scoring piece 26 has a top layer 54 and a base layer 56. Hockey player 42 is printed onto top surface 55 of top layer 54 and base layer 56 is a magnetic sheet suitable for attaching scoring piece 26 to either or both of game board 22 and blocking piece 24.

[0025] Reference is next made to Figures 4 and 5 which illustrate game 20 in use. Blocking piece 24 and scoring piece 60 have been positioned on game board 22. Scoring piece 62 has been positioned on top of blocking piece 24 and scoring piece 24 has been positioned partially on blocking piece 24 and partly directly on game board 22. Blocking piece 24 is held onto game board 22 by a magnetic attraction between their respective magnetic base layers 52 and 46. Similarly, scoring pieces 60, 62 and 64 are held onto blocking piece 24 and game board 22 by a magnetic attraction between their magnetic base layers 56 and the magnetic base layers 46 and 52 of blocking piece 24 in game board 22.

[0026] Game board 22 itself is attached to a metal support 66, which is illustrated only in Figure 5. Game board 22 is held in place on metal support 66 by its magnetic base layer 46.

[0027] A method of using game 20 will now be described. Game board 22 is initially positioned on a support. Game board 22 may be positioned on a horizontal support and in which case it may or may not be held in place by its magnetic base layer 46. Alternatively, game board 22 may be positioned on vertical support (or a non-horizontal support) in which case game board 22 is held in position by its magnetic layer 46.

[0028] If an alternative embodiment of game board 22 that does not have a magnetic base layer is being used, then game board 22 may be held on a non-horizontal support by separate magnets, clips, pins, tape or other attachment or

fastening devices. A first player then positions blocking piece 24 by tossing it at game board 22. In doing so, the first player attempts to cover as much of general scoring area 30 as possible with blocking piece 24. The portions of general scoring area 30 which are not covered by blocking piece 24 are defined as a specific scoring area 70.

5 Specific scoring area 70 may have only one section or it may consist of discontinuous portions of general scoring area 30, as is illustrated in Figure 4, depending on how blocking piece 24 is positioned. A second player then positions scoring pieces 26 by tossing them onto game board 22 and/or blocking piece 24. In doing so, the second player attempts to throw scoring pieces 26 so that they are entirely within specific

10 scoring area 70. The second player may be allotted any selected number of scoring pieces 26. When the second player has completed tossing all of the allotted scoring pieces 26, the number of scoring pieces 26 positioned entirely within specific scoring area 70 is counted and the second player is awarded a corresponding number of points. In the configuration illustrated in Figure 4, scoring piece 60 is positioned entirely within specific scoring area 70 and accordingly will score a point for the second player. Scoring piece 62 is positioned entirely on top of blocking piece 24 and is therefore not within specific scoring area 70 and does not score a point for the second player. Scoring piece 64 is positioned partially within specific scoring area 70. According to the rules set out above, scoring piece 26 does not score a point for the second player. In an alternative method of using game 20, a point may be allotted for a scoring piece which is partially within specific scoring area 70 and in such a case, scoring piece 26 would score a point for the second player.

20 [0029] The players may alternately take turns in positioning blocking piece 24 and scoring pieces 26 and may compete to determine which player can score the greater number of points using the allotted number of blocking pieces 26 during a single turn or over a selected number of turns. Game 20 may be used to loosely emulate a hockey game by allowing each player to have three turns corresponding to the three periods of a standard professional hockey game. If the players are tied at the end of the three periods, an overtime period may be used to break the tie.

25 [0030] Reference is made to Figure 2a, 2b and 2c. Game board 22, blocking piece 24 and scoring pieces 26 have been described as having magnetic base layers

46, 52 and 56. In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, a different
means may be used to attach the components of game 20 together. For example, a
hook and loop fastening system may be used to attach the pieces. In such a system,
the top surface of the top layer of each game piece 22, 24 or 26 will comprise one part
5 of the hook and loop fastening system and the bottom surface of the base layers will
comprise the corresponding part of the hook and loop fastening system. For
example, the top layers 44, 50 and 54 of the game pieces 22, 24 and 26 may contain
the hook portion of the hook and loop fastening system and their base layers 46, 52
and 56 may comprise the loop portion. In this case, the hook portions will be on the
10 top surfaces 45, 51 and 55 of the games piece 22, 24 and 26. The loop portions will
be on the bottom surfaces 47, 53 and 57 of the game pieces 22, 24 and 26. The
illustrations on the top surfaces of the game board 22, blocking piece 24 and scoring
pieces 26 may be printed directly onto the top surfaces 45, 51 and 55 of the respective
pieces. In such embodiment, the blocking piece and game pieces may be positioned
15 by tossing them onto the game board in the same manner as described above and
they will be held in place by the hook and loop portions of the hook and loop fastening
system.

[0031] Reference is next made to Figure 6, which illustrates a game 120
according to a second embodiment on a present invention. Game 120 incorporates a
game board 122 to blocking pieces 124a and 124b and a plurality of scoring pieces
126a to 126h. Game board 122 has two hockey nets, 128a and 128b depicted on it at
opposite ends 172 and 174 of game board 122. The blocking pieces 124 and
scoring pieces 126 depict two teams of hockey players. The first team, which is
shown with black jerseys, comprises blocking piece 124a and scoring pieces 126a to
25 126d. The second team, which is shown with white jerseys, comprises blocking
piece 124b and scoring pieces 126e to 126h. Game 120 may be used by two players
who may sit or stand adjacent to the opposite ends 172 and 174 of game board 122.
Each player selects one of the two teams of hockey players and positions the
respective blocking piece 124 from his set of game pieces onto the net closest to him.
30 As in game 20, the position of each blocking pieces 124a and 124b defines specific
scoring areas 170a and 170b. The players then alternately attempt to position one of

their scoring pieces 126 in the other player's specific scoring area 170a or 170b. In game 120, each player is allotted four scoring pieces. All four scoring pieces from the first team have been tossed by the first player. Scoring pieces 126a and 126c are outside of the specific scoring area 170b since they are at least partially outside of net

5 128b and therefore will not score a point for the first player. Scoring piece 126b will not score a point for the first player since it is positioned partially on top of blocking piece 124b. The first player will score a point for positioning scoring 126d entirely within specific scoring area 170b. The second player has thrown only three of his four scoring pieces and each of scoring pieces 126e, 126f and 126g is contained entirely
10 within general scoring 170a. Accordingly, the second player has scored three points. The second player also has one remaining scoring piece 126h.

15 [0032] Reference is next made to Figure 7, which illustrates a game 220 in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention. Game 220 includes a game board 222 with a pair of soccer nets 228 at its opposite ends 172 and 174, a pair of blocking pieces 224a and 224b and a number of scoring pieces 226a – 226d. Soccer net 224a has a general scoring area delimited by its posts 232, 234, crossbar 236 and goal line 238. Game board 222 has a decorative center line 274 and kick-off circles 276 and 278. Such decorative elements increase the resemblance between game board 222 and a soccer field. Similar decorative elements could be added to
20 game boards 22 or 122 to increase their resemblance with a hockey rink.

[0033] Game 220 is configured to be played by two players in a manner similar to game 120. Blocking pieces 226 have an illustration of a soccer ball on them. Alternatively, blocking pieces 226 could have an illustration of a soccer player, in a manner analogous to blockings pieces 26 of game 20. Similarly, blocking pieces 26
25 could be modified to have an illustration of a hockey puck or any other image.

[0034] Games 20, 120 and 220 have been illustrated with identically shaped blocking pieces and identically shaped scoring pieces. It may be desirable to allow differently shaped blocking and scoring pieces to be used.

30 [0035] Reference is made to Figure 8, which illustrates a game 320 according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention. Game 320 has a game board 322 with a basketball net 328 depicted on it. The entire area of net 328 defines a general

scoring area. Game 320 includes two differently shaped blocking pieces 342a and 324b, which have been positioned on game board 322 by a first player to define a specific scoring area 370. Game 320 also includes a number of scoring pieces 326a – 326c. In game 320, a scoring piece is considered to successfully positioned by the 5 second player if it is partially within the specific scoring area but not on any of the blocking pieces 326. Accordingly, scoring pieces 326a and 326b are successfully positioned. However, scoring piece 326c is not successfully positioned since it partially overlaps blocking piece 324b.

[0036] Game 320 illustrates the use of a compound rule for determining

10 whether a scoring piece has been successfully positioned.

[0037] Reference is made to Figure 9. Certain games and sports allow different numbers of points to be scored by completing different requirements. Game 420 is based on the rules of football, in which various numbers of points may be scored: 6 points are awarded for scoring a touchdown; 3 points are awarded for a field goal; 2 points are awarded for a two-point conversion; and 1 point is awarded for a one-point conversion. A touchdown and a two-point conversion are made by successfully controlling the ball in the opponents end zone; A field goal and a one-point conversion are made by successfully kicking the ball through a field goal standard.

[0038] Game 420 has a game board depicting a football field 427. Football field has a pair of end zones 428a and 428b and a pair of field goal areas 429a and 429b. End zones 428 are delimited by their edges 432, 434, 436 and 438. Field goal areas 429 are delimited by field goal standards 480. The game pieces of game 420 are divided into a first team wearing black jerseys and a second team wearing white jerseys. Game 420 includes blocking pieces 424a, 424b and 424c and scoring pieces 426a and 426c. In addition, game 420 includes target pieces 423a and 423b.

[0039] Target pieces 423a and 423b are used in game 420 to define a general scoring area when a player is attempting to complete a touchdown or a two-point conversion. The second player (i.e. the player that is using the scoring pieces) plays 30 first during a round of use of game 420. The second player positions the target pieces 423a and 423b and attempts to position them so that the feet of the player

depicted on the pieces are at least partially within the first player's end zone. In the configuration shown in Figure 9, the first players end zone is end zone 428b. The second player has successfully positioned target pieces 423a and 423b with their feet inside end zone 428b. Each target piece 423 that is successfully positioned in this manner defines a part of a general scoring area 430 (which may be non-continuous). The first player then positions blocking pieces 424a and 424b onto game board 422 and attempts to position them to cover as much as possible of general scoring area 430. As in the embodiments disclosed above, the uncovered portions of general scoring area 430 define a specific scoring area 470. The second player then attempts to position scoring piece 426a so that it partially overlaps specific scoring area 470. If he does so successfully, as is shown in Figure 9, the second player is awarded the appropriate number of points.

[0040] The use of game 420 to complete a field goal or one-point conversion is shown at end 472 of game board 422. Target pieces 423 are not used. Field goal area 429 is the general scoring area. A blocking piece 424c is positioned by one player to define a specific scoring area 471. The second player attempts to position a scoring piece 426c entirely within the specific area to complete the field goal or the one-point conversion.

[0041] The rules of game 420 are based loosely on the rules of football. A player may be given four attempts (i.e. four downs) to score a touchdown by throwing a scoring piece onto a specific scoring area, which is defined by a target piece 423 that has its feet inside and end zone and by zero, one or more blocking pieces. A player who fails on the first three attempts may be permitted to attempt a field goal on the fourth attempt to receive 3 points. Alternatively a field goal may be permitted on any turn. A player who scores a touchdown is awarded 6 points and is permitted to attempt a one-point or two-point conversion.

[0042] In game 420, during a touchdown or two-point conversion attempt, the first player is given two blocking pieces (i.e. blockers). The second player is given two target pieces (i.e. receivers) and one scoring piece (i.e. a ball). To vary the difficulty of scoring a touchdown or a two-point conversion, the number and size of the target pieces and blocking pieces may be varied.

[0043] In game 420, during a field goal or one-point conversion attempt, one player is given one blocking piece 424 and the other player is given one scoring piece 426. Alternatively, the first player may be given more than one blocking piece 424.

[0044] The rules presented here for game 420 (and the other games) are merely exemplary. Many variations to these rules are possible, including changing the number of target, blocking and scoring pieces. All such variations fall within the present invention.

[0045] For example, in game 420 a rule stating that if a player positions a scoring piece onto the hands of the football player depicted on a blocking piece, an "interception" has occurred that the player loses his turn (i.e. loss of downs).

[0046] Game 420 illustrates the use of multiple general scoring areas for touchdowns and field goals; general scoring areas defined by positioning a target piece; and the use of differently shaped target pieces 423a and 423b.

[0047] Many other variations on the games described are possible and some of these are described below.

[0048] The difficulty of scoring a point by positioning a blocking piece either entirely or partially within the general scoring area may be varied by changing the sizes of the blocking piece or pieces and the size of the scoring pieces. If a blocking piece is made larger, then a larger part of the specific scoring area is likely to be covered by it, reducing the size of the specific scoring area. If the rules of a game require that a scoring piece must be entirely within the specific scoring area, then making the scoring pieces larger reduces the likelihood that the blocking piece will be successfully positioned, since it is more likely to fall partially outside of the specific scoring area. However, if it is only necessary to position a blocking piece partially within the specific scoring area, then making the blocking pieces larger increases the likely of doing so.

[0049] Games 20, 220 and 320 include a plurality of scoring pieces. In other embodiments of these games, only one scoring piece may be provided. A player who is positioning the scoring piece may do so by tossing it onto the game board. The player's success in positioning the scoring piece entirely within the specific scoring area may be assessed and, if appropriate, the player may be awarded a

corresponding number of points. The player may then retrieve the scoring piece and toss it again for a selected number of turns. This allows the success of each attempt to position the scoring piece to be assessed without any other scoring piece covering a part of the specific scoring area.

5 [0050] Game 20 has been described as competitive two player games. Alternatively, game 20 may be used by a single player, who first positions the blocking piece and then attempts to score as many points as he or she can using the scoring pieces.

10 [0051] In games 20 and 120, the blocking piece has been described as being positioned by tossing it onto the game board. Alternatively, the blocking piece may be positioned directly on the game board by the player using the blocking piece.

15 [0052] As noted above, game board 20 may be provided with a rigid backing layer, or may be made rigid using a rigid top layer or base layer. Such an embodiment may be particularly useful in a portable or travel version of the present invention. A first player may hold the game board and position the blocking piece. The game board may then be passed to a second player, who positions the scoring pieces. Similarly, game 120 may be made portable by providing it with a rigid top layer, base layer or backing layer.

20 [0053] Games 20 and 120 have been described with an exemplary rule that allows points to be scored only for scoring pieces positioned entirely within the specific scoring area. In other embodiments, other rules for allowing points to be awarded may be used. For example, scoring pieces that are only partially within the specific scoring area may result in the awarding of points. Different rules may be used for scoring pieces that are outside of the specific scoring area because they are 25 outside the perimeter of the general scoring area and those that are outside of the specific scoring area because they overlap the blocking piece.

30 [0054] In games 20 and 120, all of the blocking pieces have an identical shape. Similarly, all of the scoring pieces have an identical shape. In an alternative embodiment, blocking pieces of different shapes may be provided and similarly, scoring pieces of different shapes may be provided. The player using the blocking pieces may be allowed to select one of the pieces or may be allowed to use more

than one of the differently shaped pieces. Similarly, the player using the scoring pieces may be allowed to choose between the differently shaped scoring pieces or may be allowed to use more than one shape of scoring piece. Different numbers of points may be allotted for successfully positioning the different scoring pieces.

5 **[0055]** In another embodiment, scoring pieces may be distinguished by placing different illustrations or colors on them. Different numbers of points may be allotted for successfully positioning different scoring pieces.

[0056] Several embodiments of the present invention have been described.

The invention includes additional variations which fall within its spirit and scope,

10 which is limited only by the appended claims.

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